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Alexander Murray ~~1780~~ 1817

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To carry the

ART OF SURGERY

To its HIGHEST PERFECTION in a
SHORT TIME,

And to erect a ROYAL ACADEMY of
SURGERY in LONDON without
Expence to the Public.

By FR. COSTE, M. D.

Formerly Physician to His Majesty the
King of PRUSSIA's Guards.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year MDCCCLVIII.



INTRODUCTION.

EVERY Attempt calculated for the general good of Mankind, however slighted by us, is always most easy to be put in Execution. Although every rational Being is desirous to maintain and extend his own Existence by any means whatever; yet it very often happens, that the lightest Incidents put an end to the most valuable Life, because those incidents have not been opportunely redressed by the assistance which good Surgery might have afforded. Instances of this are innumerable, therefore unnecessary to be produced.

It is well known that the Art of Surgery is so necessary for the preservation of Mankind, that even at the first instant of our Birth we must die had we not recourse to it: Through the whole course of Life we are liable to many Distempers and Accidents, which Surgery alone is able to remove and cure; Accidents which would put a stop to our Being, if we were deprived of the assistance of this useful Art.

It

It must be acknowledged that most of the learned Sciences, either have had their Origin or have been carried to great Perfection in *England* ever since the establishment of the Royal Society; but it is evident that the Art of Surgery is not here arrived to so great a degree of Perfection as in a neighbouring Nation.

The Cause of the little Progress that Surgery has made in *England* is, that the Knowledge acquired in the Hospitals, is attended with great Expence; the Learner has too little Time for gaining a sufficient Knowledge of the Art.

None but those that pay are admitted to see the Surgeons perform their Operations. Venality is always a barbarous Obstacle to Science.

To remedy this Inconvenience and promote the Perfection of Surgery in this Nation, it would be necessary that a great many young People be taught the Knowledge and Practice of the three chief Parts of Surgery *gratis*, viz. First, All the Operations practicable on the Human Body. Secondly, The curing Venereal Diseases. Thirdly, Midwifery. By following this Advice we should have a sufficient Number of able Surgeons, and the Perfection of this Art spread through all Parts of this Kingdom,

dom, the Colonies, Army, and Navy; which would be the surest and shortest way to preserve the Life of many Thousands of good People useful to their Country.

The Nobility and Gentry are most nearly concerned herein, for as they enjoy the first Employments in the Army, the Navy, and Colonies, they have Opportunities of knowing how greatly their Preservation depends on their having with them a sufficient Number of able Surgeons in a Battle, in a Sea-fight, and especially in the dreadful Calamities that attend long Voyages. To obtain the end here aimed at, let us consider the following Proposals.

A P L A N,

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P L A N &c.

I.

TO have an exceeding large Hospital wherein may be admitted, without any Protection or Recommendation, at any time of the Day or Night, all sorts of distempered People of both Sexes.

II.

The number of Beds to be distributed in such a manner that the greatest Part of them may be for the Wounded, the distempered with Venereal Disorders, and the pregnant Women; and the remainder for all sick Persons whatsoever, because many Accidents which belong to Surgery proceed from them, such are Abscess, Ulcers, Carrioufness

riousness of the Bones, Empiems, &c. Moreover the Surgeons here mentioned, being designed for the Colonies, the Navy, the Army, and the different Counties of the Kingdom, must learn how to cure Fevers, Loosnesses, Pleurifies, and Scurvey; consequently all sorts of sick People must be admitted into this Hospital, so that the young Surgeons may have the Opportunity of seeing how the Physicians treat those Distempers, after they have acquired, by their Study from the best Books on that Subject, the Theory of those Distempers.

III.

In this Hospital must be several learned experienced Physicians, and four chief Surgeons of well known Capacity and Integrity, because all the Success of this undertaking will depend on them, according as they are more or less able to instruct their Pupils, these might have a sufficient Salary granted them, like that at *Greenwich* Hospital, and not be permitted to receive any Fee from their Pupils.

IV.

An hundred young Men, thoroughly versed in Anatomical Knowledge, and acquainted with the practice of Bandages, and the Apparatus necessary to the Operations of Surgery, should be chosen; these young People, without paying any Thing, should be bound for six Years to help the Sick, dress Wounds, and other Operations, under the inspection of the chief Surgeons; those among them that have studied the *Latin* Tongue should be preferred to the others, as being more fit to acquire Knowledge; and if it should be thought proper to accept none but such as are acquainted with the *Latin* Tongue, I doubt not but that there might be a sufficient Number of them found in the Colleges. And to encourage those young People to apply to their Art in the Hospital the more diligently, the Government might promise them, that after their having been there six Years, they should be intitled to the same Privileges as those who serve an Apprenticeship in the City of *London*, and that if they were inclined to be employed in a Regiment, in a King's Ship, or a Colony, they should be preferred to any others, or in case they choose to settle in the
Place

Place where they were born, they should be intitled to be Surgeons of the Town, &c. without expence and free from all Taxes during Life.

V.

These young People, under the Penalty of being turned out, should never fail to be in the Hospital to dress the Wounded, when the Chiefs are visiting them; three or four of these young Surgeons at once should be obliged to watch by Night in the Hospital, to help the Sick in case of need.

VI.

Those young Persons should be instructed by their Chiefs in Chirurgical Operations, in curing Venereal Disorders and in Midwifery; the Practice of which shall be taught them after the second Year of their Time according to the Capacity that shall be found in them.

VII.

To lead them to that Practice, the chief Surgeons shall provide themselves every Winter with dead Bodies to teach the manual Operations to the young Surgeons of the Hospital, and to those who have in-

listed themselves in the Hospital to go through the same Course.

VIII.

Any young Man, who knows Anatomy perfectly well and desires to be admitted as a Pupil in the said Hospital, shall only need to have his Name entered in the chief Surgeon's Book; they shall be received by Turns, without Preference, whenever there is a Vacancy; and till that Time they must be obliged to come every Morning to the Hospital to see what the Surgeons are doing and assist them.

IX.

These young Surgeons shall write Chirurgical Observations upon any Wound or Operation committed to their Care; shall account for the Accidents, Symptoms and Expedients or Means which their Chiefs have made Use of to obtain a perfect Cure. These Observations should be read at the End of every Month, and a Choice be made of the most deserving of them to be printed. This would be a sure Way to make these young Practitioners curious in their Observations and capable of discerning the Diagnostics and Prognostics of Distempers, and to write perfectly upon Surgery.

X. Those

X.

Those young Students must absolutely acquire the Knowledge of Botany, at least to know the usual Plants, which will lead them to the *Materia Medica*, without a thorough Knowledge of which they can never succeed in their Art. It is a general Complaint here, that Botany is neglected and taught nobody*.

XI.

If these young People are not able to purchase a great Choice of the best practical Books which have been wrote upon the several Branches of their Art, a Collection of them shall be procured at the Hospital's Expence, where they may read them when they please. The Want of Books and the Neglect of Reading, are the too general Causes of Ignorance in the Arts and Sciences.

XII.

This Hospital must be open to every Physician or Surgeon, Native or Foreigner,

* They merit no Reproach who at Present want this Knowledge, for there have been no Teachers. This is a great Defect in the *English* medical Education.

who may resort thither to see and learn what is performed by the Physicians and Surgeons of the said Hospital ; they must never be refused Admittance nor to make any Contribution whatsoever.

XIII.

The young Surgeons shall open the Corps of those who die in the Hospital, and that in the Presence of their Chiefs, to know the Source of a great many Distempers, whose Symptoms are equivocal and appear with Irregularity. The Light which the Art receives from thence is of very great Moment, and most capable of compleating the thorough able Surgeon.

XIV.

After these young Surgeons have compleated the sixth Year of their Time, they shall give a Proof of their Capacity by public Demonstrations made in the Presence of their Chiefs and Fellows, and if they chuse after this to work two Years in the said Hospital, they shall be received Surgeons of *London* without paying any Thing.

XV.

We may easily foresee, that there will be a great Number of such young Students offer themselves,

themselves, as soon as the Public know that it costs nothing to have their Children instructed in an Art so useful as Surgery; many will devote to it some of their Family after they come from the *Latin* Schools.

XVI.

Two or three Apothecaries of good Capacity shall have the Care of the Pharmacy in the said Hospital; they shall take upon them to exhibit every Year a Course of *Materia Medica* and one of Chemistry, for the Use of the young Surgeons, without any further Reward than to be themselves received Apothecaries of *London* and Freemen of the City without Expence, after having been six Years in the said Hospital, where they shall have had their Lodging, Board and one hundred Pounds a Year. They must have under their Command several Mates able to help them and fit to serve in their Stead when they leave the Hospital.

XVII.

If there was no other Obstacle than to find in *London* an Hospital large enough for the Purpose intended here, I imagine that a Monthly Lottery of 100,000 Tickets, at three or four Shillings each, would be sufficient to raise a Sum necessary for building an

an immense one and establishing a large Fund to maintain it for ever without any Subscription. There is such an Hospital in *Europe* that contains four or five thousand sick, where are admitted all Sorts of People of any Nation, and that at every Hour of the Day and Night, without Protection or Recommendation ; *Jews, Christians, Turks, Arabians. Negroes* are received there. Women come from all Parts of *Europe* to lie-in and leave their Children there. Physicians and Surgeons, Foreigners and others, may beget Admittance at any Time. This Hospital was first established by a private Man, and by the Munificence of the Great and Rich it is now brought to its present Opulency ; so that it may be truly said to be the first and best School in the World for Physic and Surgery, and a most comfortable Asylum for the People. Such a one is wanted here.

A PLAN

A P L A N to erect a R O Y A L
A C A D E M Y of S U R G E R Y in L O N -
D O N, and to carry that Art to
P e r f e c t i o n in G R E A T - B R I T A I N.

I.

A L L the Surgeons of *London* shall unite
in an Academical Society, each of
whom shall have the Title of Ordinary Fel-
low.

II.

One of them shall be elected President of
the Academy to regulate the Meetings and
keep the Rules and Orders in Force.

III.

A Secretary being chosen, his Business
shall be to keep the Register and maintain
a national and foreign Correspondence, to
receive the Memoirs and Observations sent
to the Academy and give an Account of
them at every general Meeting; he shall
give Notice to the Public that all Letters be
franked to him.

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IV. The

IV.

All the Surgeons and Physicians of *Great-Britain*, of the Colonies, and of all *Europe*, shall be invited to send their Observations to the Academy; the Secretary shall read them, and those that are approved of by the Members shall be put aside to be printed with the Transactions of the Academy.

V.

All Physicians and Surgeons, national and foreign, of a public distinguished Capacity, shall be admitted as Members of the Academy; a Diploma, sealed by the Academy, shall be given them, and they may take the Title of Fellow of the said Academy, at the Front of their Works, as a Mark of Ability, the Academy of *London* being known to receive only such learned Men.

VI.

After any Memoir hath been read in the Assembly, every Fellow shall be allowed to propose his Objections for or against the said Memoir, and that one after another, and be checked or desired to continue according to the Order of the President.

VII. Notice

VII.

Notice shall be given to the Public, that any Observation made upon an extraordinary Case must be testified under the Hands of two Eye-witnesses at least.

VIII.

All the Surgeons of Hospitals in *Great-Britain* shall be desired to observe with Exactness all Distempers that merit Attention which are committed to their Care, in order to send the Academy an exact and well circumstanced Description of them.

IX.

The Academy shall give the Title and Diploma of a Correspondent to many able, learned Physicians and Surgeons, national and foreign, especially to those who reside in Universities and large Towns. This would be a ready Way to be acquainted with new and extraordinary Cases.

X.

Every Year, at a general Meeting, a Choice shall be made of the best Memoirs sent to the Academy, which shall be printed, with the Names of the Authors, in the *Academical Transactions*.

XI.

The Academy shall have a Library of the best Books that have been wrote upon practical Physic, Surgery, Chymistry, Pharmacy, Botany and *Materia Medica*. This Library may be moderate, but choice; it must be open twice a Week from Morning to Night, for the Benefit of the young Surgeons and for such as are desirous to learn.

XII.

The ordinary Fellows of *London* shall be charged by Turn, to translate in *English* what has been published upon the several Branches of Surgery, either in *Latin*, *French*, *Italian* or *Spanish*, to elucidate the Art.

XIII.

Any *English* Surgeon who has been ten Years chief Surgeon in an Hospital out of *London* shall be received Member of this Academy.

XIV.

The President shall appoint two or three Meetings in a Month, to which none of the ordinary Fellows of *London* must fail of being present, Sickness only excepted.

XV. The

XV.

The Academy having not yet any Income to give annually a gold Medal of thirty Guineas Value, as a Reward to the Learned, who write best upon any Point of Practice proposed to the World by the said Academy; the Great, the Rich, and the worthy Promoters of Science in this Kingdom, must be invited to be Subscribers to such an honourable Fund. Though such Subscriptions are too frequently met with abroad, they are rarely to be found in *England*. Doubtless an Academy of this kind may one Day or other meet with a Squire *Neadham*, who will do that Business at once *.

XVI.

The Surgeons of *London* only, as Ordinary Fellows, must never be permitted to write for the gold Medal, as they are supposed to be of a Capacity more than able to obtain it; it must therefore be the Reward of any other Physician or Surgeon, *English* or Foreigner.

* *Henry Neadham*, Esq. hath left 40,000 Pounds to the *Foundling-Hospital*, besides considerable Legacies to his Relations and Friends. See *Daily Advertiser*, Friday, Feb. 24, 1758.

Having

Having communicated this Plan to several Gentlemen they highly approved of the second Part, which relates to the Academy of Surgery, but have made some Objections to the first which I promised to answer. It has been objected

First,

If Surgery be taught gratis the lowest part of the People will dishonour the Art by their running into it.

Answer.

I know nothing low or base in Man but his Vices and Ignorance. Birth depends only upon Chance ; Genius and Wit must be preferred to any other Qualification in Man ; most of those who have been esteemed illustrious Men, have sprung from low Extractions.

Secondly,

This Plan is too generous to be put in execution ; generally speaking, Men are led by self-interest.

Answer.

Because this Plan is generous it may the more easily be put in execution, it will be expensive to no body. I know the covetousness of Man's Heart, but we may perhaps find honest People who really feel the true Love of the public Welfare, and believe

lieve they will esteem it an honour to be the first Promoters of this undertaking. Had the World always been permitted to run its common Course it would certainly have been very wrong, and we should still have continued in the grossest Ignorance and Stupidity.

Thirdly,

Who can compel the Surgeons of London to form an Academy of Surgery and fill the Office of Fellows?

Answer.

Compulsion is by no means requisite for the forming an Academy. Love of true Learning, Honour and Emulation have been hitherto sufficient to maintain the Royal Academies of *London, Paris, Bologna, Berlin, and Petersburg*. Can the Surgeons of *London* only be void of such a noble Emulation? To suspect it would be an Affront to them, two or three of them are enough to bring all the others to such a Resolution. We have before our Eyes an instance of the most complete and most generous Academy in the World; near seven hundred Gentlemen, equally distinguished by their Rank and Qualifications, are the Fellows of this Society, who have voluntarily subscribed a large Sum of Money to promote Arts and Sciences. I could prove that this extraordinary Munificence

cence eclipses that of all Princes who have erected Academies. But the Academy of Surgery may be erected without Expence; why then should it not be erected?

Fourthly,

It is not an Advantage sufficient to recompense a Surgeon, who hath worked six Years in an Hospital, to be employed in a Man of War, a Regiment, or in a Colony.

Answer.

When they have served seven Years to a Surgeon pray what have they learned? or what have they seen? Almost nothing. Nevertheless they are admitted into the Service, after having been two or three Months in an Hospital; is there any Comparison between such a one, and one who has had six Years experience in a good Hospital? If you would have learned People you must pay them according to their Merit, or be satisfied with the most barbarous Ignorance: This must be the case where Indifference and Avarice are predominant. If the pay of those who are employed as first Surgeons in a Ship of War, or in a Regiment, be not sufficient, let it be doubled directly, that the Salary may be adequate to the Capacity, then may we be very sure to recover Health and preserve

preserve Life under their Care, this me- thinks deservedly merits our Attention. A good able Surgeon may, in a long Voyage, preserve the Lives of three hundred Seamen, they must be rated very low if they are not estimated at a hundred Pounds an Head; it is then as much as if that Surgeon had saved his Country 30,000*l.* and multiply that by one hundred for the Navy, as much for the Army, and as much for the Colonies, and then you will find it not a Trifle, being 9000,000*l.* of Money.

Fifthly,

When there is too great a number of People in an Hospital the Air grows unwholsom.

Answer.

This may be true in regard to the Hospitals of *London*, which are all too low and too much confined.

Let there be a large Hospital, well exposed, whose Halls should be at least twenty-six Feet wide, and eighteen Feet high, let the Windows be very large and opened all at one Time every Day, and if it be always kept clean it will be as wholsom as a good Apartment. There is no great difficulty in this.

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Sixthly,

Sixthly,

You say without Expence to the Public, a Lottery is expensive to all such as deposit Money therein.

Answer.

I believe no body puts Money into a Lottery when they know the purchase of a Ticket exceeds their Ability; it may be called a Game where the Adventurers may draw much more than they venture; besides we ought to scorn a small Loss, when it is evident that we ourselves are concerned in the Advantages of it. Moreover a Lottery is not a burdensome Tax, no body is constrained or terrified by it, let who will venture his Money.

Seventhly,

The Surgeons of London will never own themselves inferior to any others.

Answer.

No body in this World will acknowledge his inferiority in any Rank whatsoever; I know that there is in *London* some able Surgeons, equal to any others. The design here is only to increase their Number, so that the Army, Navy, the Colonies and Counties may be provided with them. Conscience
cannot

cannot dissemble with itself, it needs only to make a Comparison with its Neighbour's Works and its own, to know on which side the Scale will fall. A Man of Wit and Genius is always true ; a Fool stubborn and proud: Where is the Man who with a small Dose of Impartiality, would give up himself for such an one.

Eighthly,

Four Surgeons are not sufficient to instruct an hundred young People.

Answer.

A single one is more than sufficient to instruct and carry them to Perfection. An able Master may form a very celebrated School, and leave after him a great many Pupils equal to himself, who may in Time eclipse his Ability with their own. Physic, Surgery, Painting, Architecture and many other Arts afford us several instances. *Boerhaave* hath made a thousand able Physicians, *Morand* as many able Surgeons, *Scamozzi* and *Rubens* as many Painters and Architects, the single reading of *Horace's* Works and Precepts make to this Day celebrated Poets. What may we not expect from four experienced Surgeons who would generously communicate their Knowledge.

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Ninthly,

Ninthly,

Why should the Cure of Venereal Disorders belong rather to Surgeons than Physicians?

Answer.

I know that Physicians only have wrote perfectly well on these Disorders, and have taught others how they may be cured; but as the Public are not acquainted with this they commonly apply to Surgeons, who must then learn how to cure them since they expect a Cure and depend on them for it; moreover these Distempers are subject to several Operations that Physicians scorn to perform and Surgeons are obliged to learn.

Tenthly,

If Surgeons attempt to cure the Scurvey, Pleurifies, Loosenesses, it is an encroachment upon Physic, and that will shorten the Physician's profit.

Answer.

There are a thousand Occurrences where such sick People happen to die for want of Physicians, especially at Sea, in the Field, in the Colonies, and elsewhere. It matters not to the Public who cures them provided they be cured. A Surgeon who has not some knowledge of Physic is always a very dangerous

dangerous Man, how can he guard against such Accidents as may happen to a Man on whom he has made an Operation, or to those who have been dangerously wounded? Besides Surgeons as well as Apothecaries have seldom an Opportunity of practising Physic on any but the Poor, why should we hinder them? What Encroachment is this on the Physician's Profit? when they have not a Capacity required for that. It is loss of Life only to those who trust them, will you remedy this? Let them be learned.

Eleventhly.

If your Plan was followed Surgeons would be able to find no Apprentices and that would be to their Loss.

Answer.

The Consequence is not just, but granting this, what signifies the Loss caused to a small Number of Surgeons, provided we do not hurt their Fortunes, and that we promote the Welfare of the Public? Who would be so bad a Patriot as to complain of it?

Twelfthly,

There is already so many Hospitals in London, why should we build another?

Answer.

Answer.

All the Hospitals of *London*, except *Chelsea College* and *Greenwich*, are rather small Houses than Hospitals; they are settled on a footing diametrically opposite to that which I propose; besides, they are not sufficient for the fourth Part of those who want to be admitted into them; the way of Subscription, which supports the most Part of them, is indeed very pious, and deserves to be admired; but it is not universally good for the Poor, because unless they be known to the Benefactors they never can be admitted into them; and as those charitable Persons may dispose only of a few Places, many may die in the Streets or in a Garret for want of help when those Places are filled; I have known several instances of this. In short, an Hospital with two or three thousand Beds, where every sick Person could be admitted at any Time, is absolutely necessary in this large Metropolis, as much for the preservation and help of the People, as for the further Perfection of Physic and Surgery in the Kingdom. Such an Hospital would be no less an Honour to the Nation than the fine Bridge of *Westminster*, it would not cost half so much, and would be infinitely more useful and beneficial.

Thirteenthly,

Thirteenthly,

Your Plan cannot succeed because it supposes that one should grant several Privileges which depend only on the Parliament, and on the City, it will only draw against you a great many Enemies.

Answer.

The Privileges here in question are but mere Trifles, which cost only a little piece of Parchment; and if the Parliament find this Plan of use to the Nation they doubtless will grant those Privileges, because they always have the good of the Public at Heart; as to the Enemies I may draw against me thereby I don't regard them: I know no Physic that can cure Jealousy or Envy, those who are troubled with these Passions are greatly to be lamented, not only because they shew the weakness of their Wit and baseness of their Heart, but also because they are absolutely incurable.

F I N I S.



